

**DATE:** December 18, 2023

**TO:** John Johnson, Executive Director, MDCR

**FROM:** MDCR Executive Team

**SUBJECT:** MDCR Legislative Report, Fiscal Year 2023

The data provided in this report provides information required for the most recent fiscal year. Additional detailed information may be included in the attachments and will be noted throughout the report.

**Detailed Description of MDCR Operations & Organizational Chart**

Please refer to the attached compiled FY 2023 MCRC newsletter MI Civil Rights for a full and detailed description of MDCR Operations and Divisions:

Please refer to the attached MDCR Organizational Chart Nov., 2023 to see all of the FTE positions associated with MDCR.

Sec. 404. (1) The department of civil rights shall prepare and transmit a detailed report that includes, but is not limited to, the following information for the most recent fiscal year:

(c) The number of complaints by type of complaint.

**FY23 Certified Complaints Filed**

Area of Discrimination	# of Complaints
Education	76
Employment	925
Public Accommodation/Public Service	337
Housing	250

Law Enforcement	71
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1659</b>

(d) The average cost of, and time expended, investigating complaints.

(e) The percentage of complaints that are meritorious and worthy of investigation or settlement and the percentage of complaints that have no merit.

**FY23 - 6,556 New Complaints Made**

64% (4,206) Closed in Evaluation (which includes inability to contact customer)

.7% (40) Open in Evaluation

35.3% (2,310) Moved to Initiation and beyond

(f) A listing of amounts awarded to claimants.

**FY23 – 95 Cases Closed with Actual Amounts awarded totaling \$395,722.71**

50.00
50.00
100.00
125.00
200.00
250.00
250.00
350.00
375.00
375.00
392.51
400.00
500.00
500.00
500.00
500.00
500.00
500.00
545.00
604.77
750.00
1000.00
1000.00
1000.00
1000.00
1200.00
1474.00
1500.00
1500.00

1500.00
1500.00
1500.00
1540.00
1870.10
1874.00
2000.00
2000.00
2000.00
2250.00
2400.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2500.00
2550.00
2576.92
2700.00
3000.00
3000.00
3000.00
3000.00
3500.00
3500.00
3500.00
3500.00
3500.00
3600.00
3750.00
4000.00
4000.00
4500.00
4796.75
5000.00
5000.00
5000.00
5000.00
5000.00

5000.00
5000.00
5000.00
5250.00
5500.00
6000.00
6000.00
6500.00
7778.00
8500.00
8650.00
8670.00
10000.00
10000.00
10000.00
12000.00
12000.00
13500.00
19658.47
20000.00
25519.59
35297.60

(g) Expenditures associated with complaint investigation and enforcement.

(h) A listing of complaint investigations closed per FTE position for each of the past 5 years.

**FY23 1368 total complaint investigations closed**

34 – Attorneys  
3 – Enforcement Attorney Liaison  
1290 – Investigators  
41 – Managers

**FY22 1299 total complaint investigations closed**

76 – Attorneys  
1158 – Investigators  
26 – Community Engagement/Specialists  
39 – Managers

**FY21 1373 total complaint investigations closed**

106 – Attorneys  
1208 – Investigators  
10 – Community Engagement Civil Rights Specialists  
49 – Managers

**FY20 1199 total complaint investigations closed**

1123 – Investigators

61 – Attorneys (includes Recon up until CRIS implemented in 3/2020)  
15 – Managers

**FY19 1626 total complaint investigations closed**

1499 – Investigators  
125 – Attorneys (includes Recon)  
2 – Managers

(i) A listing of complaint evaluations completed per FTE position for each of the past 5 years.

**FY23 6886 evaluations completed**

3441 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
3026 – Investigators  
284 – Managers  
11 – Enforcement Attorney Liaison  
124 – Other Enforcement Staff

4687 closed in Evaluation process stage  
2206 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
2283 – Investigators  
188 – Managers  
10 – Enforcement Attorney Liaison

2199 evaluated and moved to Initiation or beyond  
1235 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
743 – Investigators  
96 – Managers  
1 – Enforcement Attorney Liaison  
124 - Other Enforcement Staff

**FY22 5601 evaluations completed**

3385 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
1919 – Investigators  
211 – Managers  
86 – Civil Rights Specialist/Other Administrator

3483 closed in Evaluation process stage  
1301 – Investigators  
1994 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
129 – Managers  
59 – Civil Rights Specialist/Department Specialist/Other Administrators

2118 evaluated and moved to Initiation or beyond  
618 - Investigators  
1391 - Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
82 - Managers  
27 - Civil Rights Specialist/Department Specialist/Other Administrators

**FY21 4934 evaluations completed**

3329 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
1303 – Investigators  
132 – Managers  
147 – Attorneys  
21 – Equity Technician  
2 – Ad Support

2932 closed in Evaluation process stage

1962– Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
792 – Investigators  
55 – Managers  
109 – Attorneys  
12 – Equity Technician  
2 - Ad Support

2002 evaluated and moved to Initiation or beyond

1367 - Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
511 - Investigators  
77 - Managers  
38 - Attorneys  
9 - Equity Technician

**FY20 5359 evaluations completed**

3773 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
1443 – Investigators  
35 – Managers  
103 – Attorneys  
5 – Ad Support

2905 closed in Evaluation process stage

2036– Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
784 – Investigators  
15 – Managers  
65 – Attorneys  
5 - Ad Support

2454 evaluated and moved to Initiation or beyond

1737 - Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
659 - Investigators  
20 - Managers  
38 - Attorneys

**FY19 6534 evaluations completed**

5085 – Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
1407 – Investigators  
36 – Managers  
6 – Ad Support

3303 closed in Evaluation process stage  
2713– Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
573 – Investigators  
11 – Managers  
6 - Ad Support

3231 evaluated and moved to Initiation or beyond  
2372 - Civil Rights Claims Examiners  
834 - Investigators  
25 – Managers

(j) Productivity projections for the current fiscal year, including investigations closed per FTE, complaint evaluations completed per FTE, and average time expended investigating complaints.

(k) Revenues and expenditures associated with section 403 of this part by local unit.



## MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** December 12, 2023  
**TO:** John E. Johnson Jr., Executive Director  
**FROM:** Abdel Aly, Director of Finance & Management Services  
**SUBJECT:** FY23 MDCR Line Items

### **MDCR FY 2022-2023 Appropriation Line Items**

#### **10012 (Unclassified)**

- Executive Office
- General Counsel
- Legislative Liaison
- Special Projects
- Fund Developer

#### **10031 (Executive Office)**

- Executive Office
- Finance & Management Services
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Communication

#### **37425 (Enforcement)**

- Enforcements & Investigations
- Legal Affairs & Reconsideration
- Disability Rights & Compliance

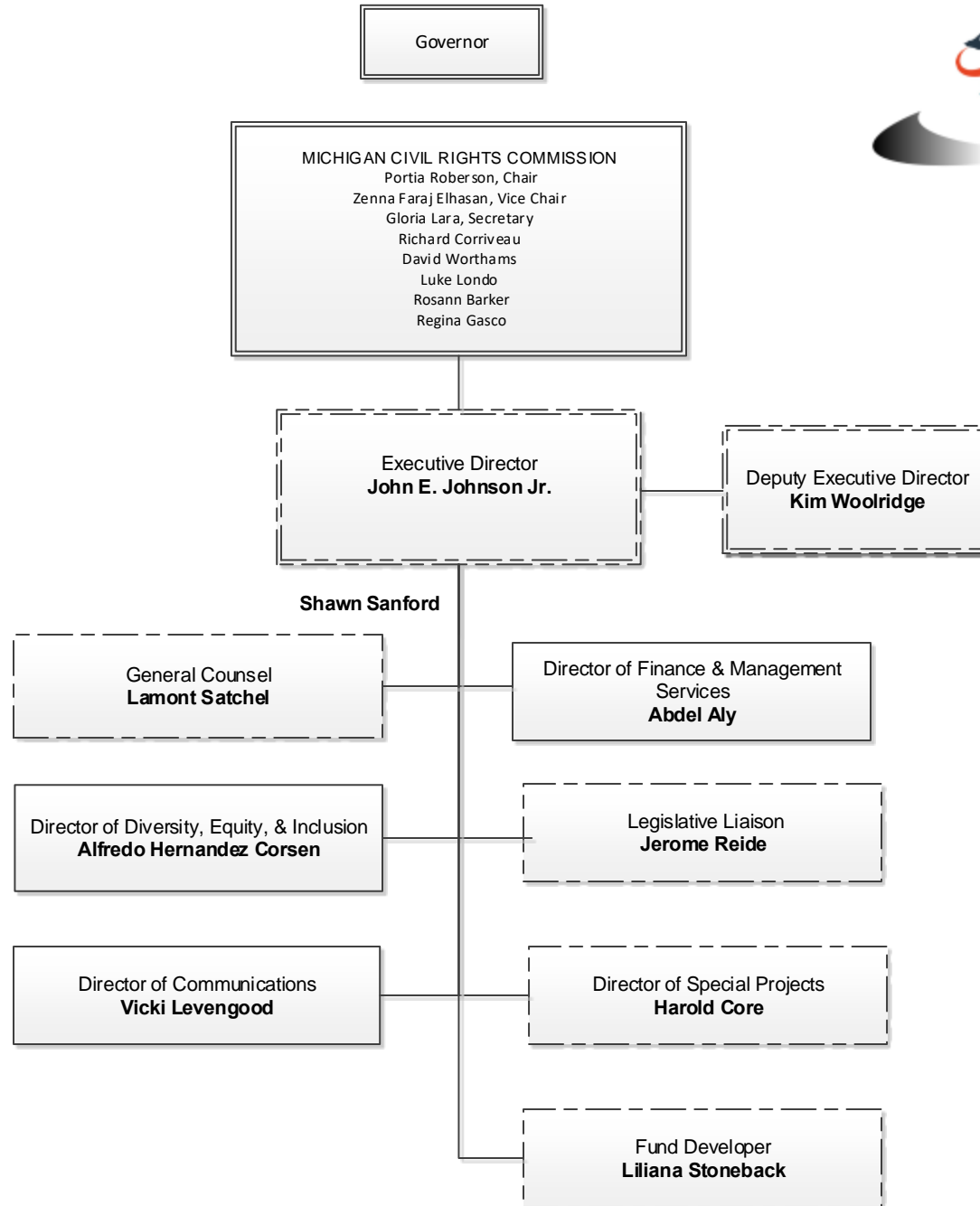
#### **40050 (DODDBHH)**

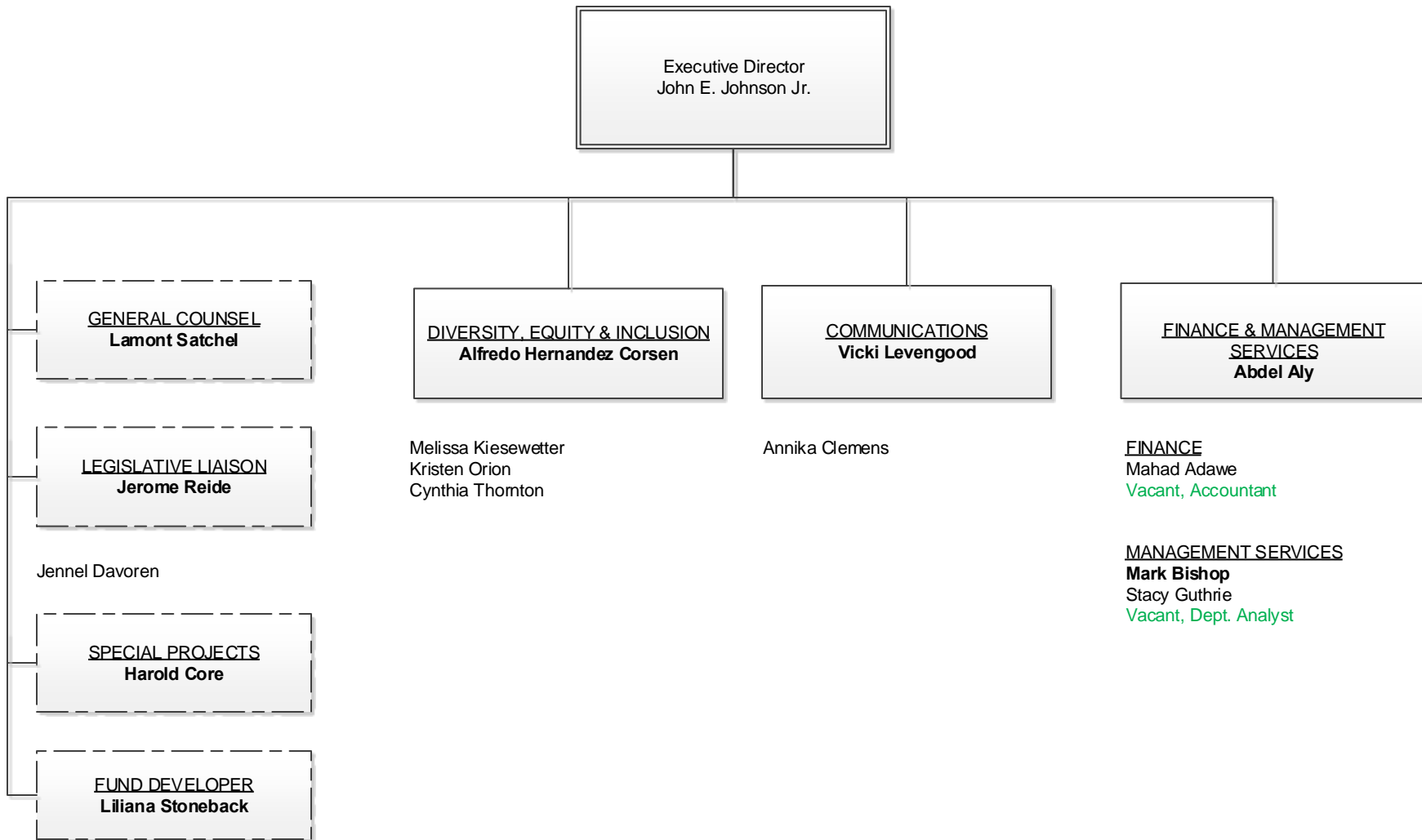
- Division on Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing

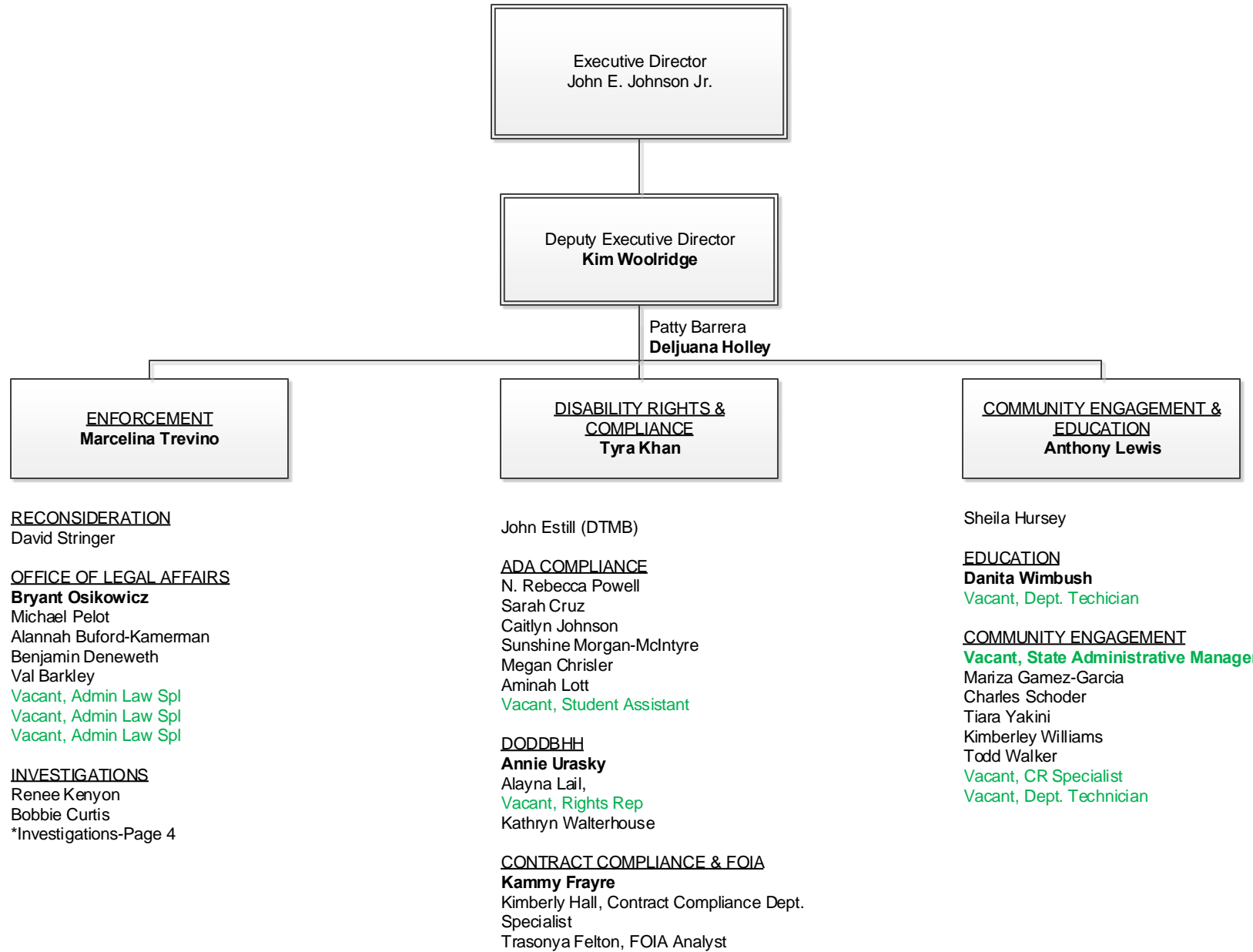
#### **44045 (Public Affairs)**

- Community Engagement
- Education

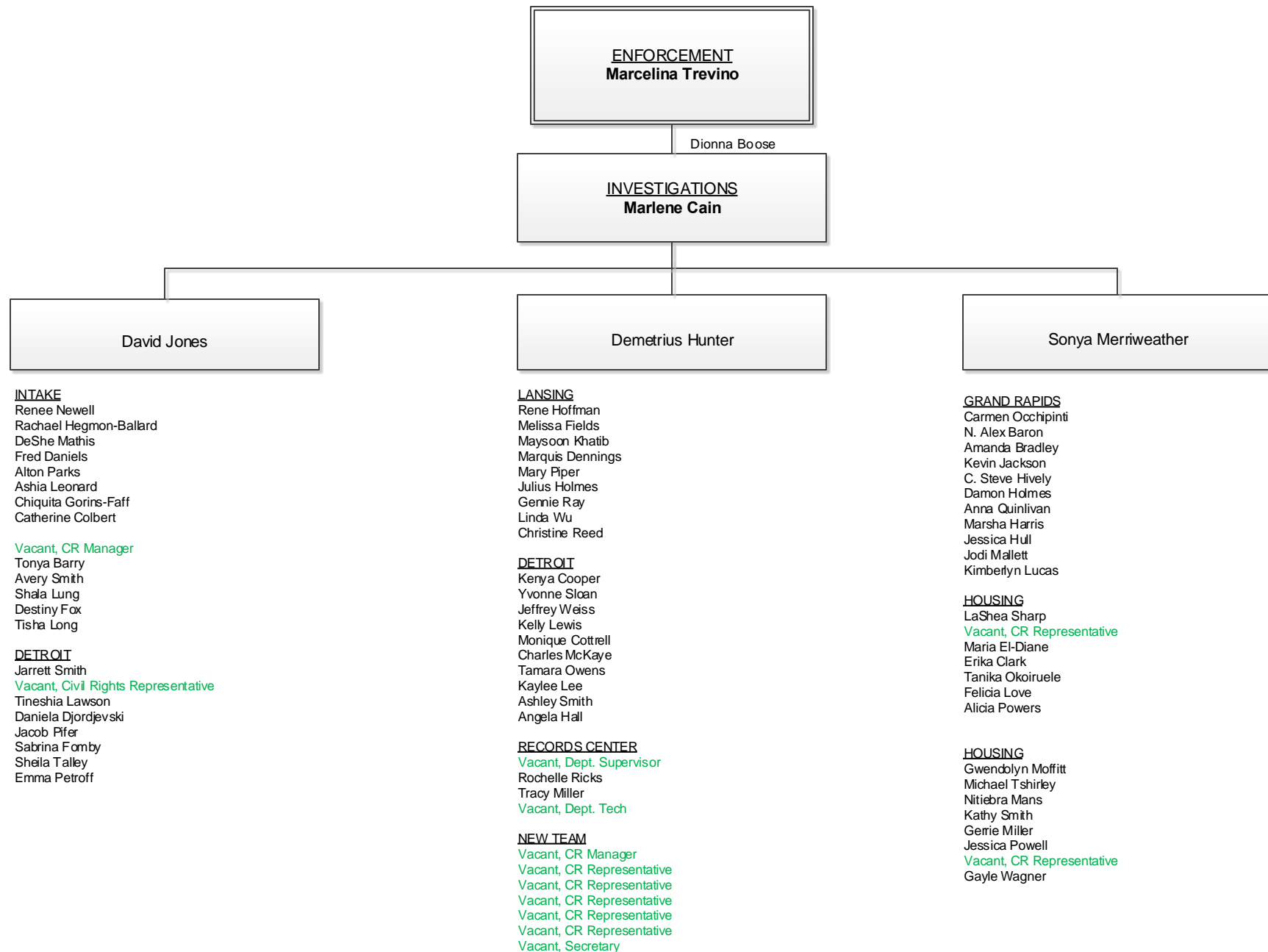








\* Charles Schoder WOC as State Administrative Manager in CED



\* Rachael Hegmon-Ballard WOC as CR Manager in Intake  
\* Amanda Bradley WOC as CR Manager in Intake

## 2023 Civil Rights Summit Recap - MI Response 2 Hate Conference Link

*Michigan Department of Civil Rights sent this bulletin at 08/11/2023 10:32 AM EDT*

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

**MI CIVIL RIGHTS**  
News from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights



Special Edition: August 3, 2023

### In This Issue:

- [Message From Executive Director Johnson](#)
- [2023 Civil Rights Summit Recap](#)

## Message From Executive Director Johnson

Dear Stakeholders of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR):

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 2023 Civil Rights Summit a success. A great number of partners, sponsors, attendees, speakers, and staff helped us to create another great tribute to the everyday civil rights work happening across Michigan.

This year's topic was the "*Impact of Discrimination on Health*." Approaching bias through the lens of personal and social consequences helps us to further demonstrate the absolute need to stand against intolerance. The scholarly expertise and life experience shared at the summit made it absolutely clear that unlawful discrimination directly impacts the well-being and even survival of marginalized groups.



Whether you attended the summit or not, we hope you will find value in the brief recap and linked videos below. It is my hope that we have once again helped to move the fight for equality and access forward.

## 2023 MI Response 2 Hate Conference

On September 14, 2023, MDCR and the Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes are once again presenting the MI Response 2 Hate Conference. This year the topic is *Legislating Against Hate*. During the event we will also commemorate the 25th anniversary of the deaths of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr.

Confirmed speakers include:

- Michael Lieberman, Southern Poverty Law Center
- Becky L. Monroe, California Civil Rights Department
- Louvon Byrd Harris, The Byrd Foundation for Racial Healing
- Judy and Dennis Shepard, Matthew Shepard Foundation

Pre-registration is required and ends September 1, 2023. For more information or to register: <https://bit.ly/435zaKd>.

***John E. Johnson, Jr., J.D.***

***Executive Director***

***Michigan Department of Civil Rights***

*(Photo of Executive Director Johnson)*

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## 2023 Civil Rights Summit Recap

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Held on June 27, the 2023 Civil Rights Summit was a full day of information, discussion and networking with more than 250 attendees. While it is impossible to replicate the full experience now, this recap will capture some of the more salient points.

*(Image of 2023 Civil Rights Summit logo)*

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## **Morning Plenary**

### **MORNING KEYNOTE:**

**Hon. Tommy F. Stallworth  
III – Senior Advisor; Office  
of the Governor**

As we examine the impact of discrimination on health and its effect on communities of color, it is important to celebrate accomplishments and the tremendous improvements to human lives. Representation

matters when it comes to policies to combat discrimination and remove barriers to access, so it is important that our current Governor has done so much to ensure an inclusive government. Examples include:

- Appointing more than 500 African American Michiganders to boards, commissions and full time positions.
- Over 60% of the Governor's appointees are women or people of color, including the first Black woman on the Michigan Supreme Court.
- Creation of a task force to examine and reduce disparities related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Call to Action:**

According to Stallworth, Michigan needs advocates for legislation and participation in efforts to solve problems and improve community services. He asked each attendee to leave the summit with a personal list of actionable items and initiatives to drive results.

### **MDCR Executive Director John E. Johnson, Jr**

Executive Director Johnson provided a brief recap of the work done on the action plans from last year's summit. He also urged attendees to continue collaborative efforts to move the needle.

[Watch the Full Morning Plenary on Youtube](#)

*(Photo of Tommy F. Stallworth III)*

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## Morning Breakout Sessions

### Education and Health

#### Key Points/ Action Steps:

- Replacing culturally competent with the phrase "culturally responsive and respectful." Education needs to move from coercion, control, acculturation and compliance to creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration.
- Representation matters: We need to increase diversity among educators, and use literature and classroom tools that reflect the diversity of Michigan.
- Teachers need to be paid more and have training on implicit bias and culturally responsive teaching practices.
- Real institutional and systems change will only come with antiracist policy changes.
- Student and parent/community engagement is necessary. Ask students to identify what inclusivity issues exist in their learning environment.



[Watch the entire Education and Health Breakout](#)

### Environmental Justice and Health

#### Key Points / Action Steps:

- All living creatures and the planet itself are impacted by Environmental Justice (EJ). We can't talk about EJ without talking about climate change.
- Discrimination is at the heart of environmental injustice and we must consider historical patterns. During redlining, environmental pollutants were placed in poor neighborhoods and communities of color.
- Highlight the draft [Michigan Environmental Justice Screening Tool](#).

[Watch the entire Environmental Justice and Health Breakout](#)

### Social Determinants of Health

#### Key Points / Action Steps:

- Lack of access to quality education, living in food deserts, and other social barriers shape social determinants of health as they impact entire populations (e.g., policies in Flint influenced water crisis).
- Social determinants of health shape disparities and are based on differential access to resources, power, and services in the community.



- Language interpreters, including interpreters for the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing are needed in hospitals and clinics.
- We must recognize implicit/explicit bias and its impact on interactions between patients and practitioners, and practice cultural humility.

**[Watch the entire Social Determinants of Health Breakout](#)**

*(Photo of a wide shot of the well attended summit)*



## **Lunch Plenary**

**Dawn M. Shanafelt, MPA, BSN,  
RN MDHHS Director – Maternal &  
Infant Health/Title V Maternal  
Child Health Block Grant Program**

Shanafelt shared that when it comes to healthcare, inequality literally destroys lives. Whether it is due to the actual disease or unjust systems, the cost of injustice is literally death. We are each the world's foremost expert on our own

bodies, but unfortunately systems often push our concerns aside or otherwise refuse to listen.

From 1900 to now the overall infant mortality rate has continued to drop, reaching 6.2 per 1000 deaths in 2021. Each of these deaths represents a devastated family and the loss of the hopes and dreams for a new life. However, the disparity ratio of infant deaths offers a sobering reality. In 2021, Black non-Hispanic children were 2.67 times more likely to die than White non-Hispanic children. In 2021 that number climbed to 3.09. Disparities of this nature do not represent the failures of individual people or medical professionals.

**Call to Action:**

- Implicit bias training to help medical professionals understand their own biases.
- Doula Initiative: Doulas can provide additional care, serve as an advocate for mother and child, and provide critical information and support.
- Perinatal Quality Collaborative and Maternal Infant Health Summit: Create inclusive opportunities for people to come together and discuss ways to improve the health of mothers and children.

**[Watch the entire Lunch Plenary](#)**

*(Photo of Dawn M. Shanafelt)*

## Afternoon Breakout Sessions

### LGBTQ+ and Health

#### Key Points / Action Steps:

- With respect to preventable differences in burden of disease, the LGBTQ+ population is at high risk for mental health issues like depression and anxiety, as well as substance use and abuse, and suicides. Certain populations are also at increased risk for cancers, sexually transmitted illnesses, or acts of violence.
- LGBTQ+ communities are often refused care because of their orientation or gender expression. They can also encounter communication barriers and unintentional bias from health care providers and staff.
- It is critical to start by asking patients and the larger LGBTQ+ community what they need and incorporate those needs into communication interactions, treatment routines, staff training programs, and organizational strategic plans.



[Watch the entire LGBTQ+ and Health Breakout](#)

### COVID-19 Racial Disparities Taskforce

#### Key Points / Action Steps:

- The Task Force understood the historical tension between science and community. We used the data to educate the community – and in mobile units we trained and recruited parents to become advocates of the work.
- The pandemic taught us to adapt and change in efforts to mitigate the virus as much as possible, but systemic problems can't be solved without representation from those impacted.
- Misinformation put lives in jeopardy. We needed to combat misinformation in order to dismantle disparities and effectively counter resistance to the science behind the strategies for reducing the spread of the virus.

[Watch the entire COVID-19 Racial Disparities Taskforce Breakout](#)

### Disability and Health

#### Key Points / Action Steps:

- Many medical professionals never received training or instruction related to serving people with disabilities so they don't understand their

responsibilities, cultural competency, or the tools available. This must change.

- We need people with disabilities in the room when decisions are made about policies and practices. A wide variety of choices from the width of sidewalks and doorways to data collection can result in barriers or disparate impacts for people with disabilities. Nothing about us, without us.
- We need better long-term partnerships between healthcare centers, medical schools and advocates/service agencies for people with disabilities.

### [Watch the entire Disability and Health Breakout](#)

*(Photo of a wide shot of a panel discussion)*



## **Closing Plenary**

**Renee Canady – Chief  
Executive Officer – Michigan  
Public Health Institute**

Over the years health professionals have grown in their understanding of what it takes to be healthy. We started with the four food groups, added exercise, and eventually discussed sleep deprivation. But we need to move

beyond these factors and ask why people don't achieve healthy goals. Any analysis of health has to start with the environment.

### **Action Steps**

It is not enough to tell people what factors contribute to health. Our mission must be to ensure the conditions necessary for good health. Don't tell people to engage in physical activity every day, analyze the conditions behind whether they can exercise frequently. We are already discussing the social determinants of health, but we have to ask why. Housing affects health, but why do some people have affordable safe housing and others don't?

**Roshanak Mehdipanah, PhD, MS –**

**University of Michigan School of Public Health**

Housing is a multi-dimensional determinant of health. There is often a disconnect between housing issues and the discussions of health impacts, even though housing policy has shaped cities and the racial health inequities that exist today. Studies have demonstrated the acute impact that housing conditions can have on mental health maladies such as anxiety or depression. There is also research to demonstrate that poor housing conditions

are often linked with asthma, allergies, exposure to toxins like lead and asbestos, and pest related diseases.

Unaffordable, inaccessible, and poor-quality homes have impacts at the individual, neighborhood, and city level. Mortgage foreclosures have been associated with worse mental health symptoms like trouble sleeping, stomach cramps, and chest pains.

### **Action Steps**

Addressing these issues begins with changing the narrative so that housing is viewed as a basic human right. Research demonstrates that affordable and accessible housing is necessary to promote better mental and physical health. Public and private policies should prioritize strategies to retain affordable housing stocks and preserve cities by diminishing forced displacement.

[Watch the entire Closing Plenary](#)

*(Combined photo of Canady and Mehdipanah)*

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## **Like Trees, Problems Have Roots**

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[Michigan Department of Civil Rights](#)

## **August is for Civil Rights Opportunities!**

*Michigan Department of Civil Rights sent this bulletin at 08/17/2023 10:21 AM EDT*

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**MI CIVIL RIGHTS**  
*News from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights*



August 17, 2023

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  - [Civil Rights Commission Actions](#)
  - [Legislative Update](#)
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## Message From Executive Director Johnson

Dear Stakeholders of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR):

As we approach the end of the summer, I am grateful for the support and efforts of our ongoing partners around the state. Every single day we are reminded of the power of collaboration and the need to work together to address civil and human rights issues. To that end, I would like to highlight an excellent example.

By now, everyone should know that we held a Civil Rights Summit in June. If you missed that occasion, you can still read the [brief Summit summary](#) or [watch video of the full event](#). As the second such statewide conference in a row, I am amazed at the number of organizations that expressed interest in planning, presenting, or attending.

I would also like to take this time to send an extra thank you to the sponsors of the Civil Rights Summit listed below. Each of these partners saw the vision of the event and decided to provide funding. While financial support is not the only way to support civil rights, I certainly appreciate their efforts.

Since the Summit, we have been hard at work building on its success. In this issue of our MI Civil Rights newsletter, you'll find plenty of new opportunities to get involved. We hope you will register and join us!

*Sincerely,*

**John E. Johnson, Jr., J.D.**

**Executive Director**

**Michigan Department of Civil Rights**

*(Photo of Executive Director Johnson)*

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## 2023 Civil Rights Summit Sponsors



**Diamond + Sponsor**

**Ayad Law**

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### Platinum Sponsors

**Richard J. Corriveau Law**



**Detroit Branch NAACP**

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### Gold Sponsors

**CNS Healthcare**



**THE KRESGE FOUNDATION**

**Kresge Foundation**

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## Upcoming MDCR Events


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### Civil Rights 101 Trainings in August

### Civil Rights 101


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Learn the basics of your civil rights and responsibilities in Michigan:



- Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act
- Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act
- How to file a complaint

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Michigan Department of Civil Rights

Date: August 17, 2023      Time: 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM  
Mount Clemens Library  
150 Cass Ave  
Mount Clemens, MI 48043

**Free and Open to the Public**

#### Mount Clemens

**Date:** August 17, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

**Location:**

Mount Clemens Library  
150 Cass Ave  
Mount Clemens, MI 48043

#### Grand Rapids

**Date:** August 30, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

**Location:**

Migrant Legal Aid  
104 Fuller Avenue, N.E.,  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Both sessions are free and open to the public. Learn the basics of your rights and responsibilities under state and federal civil rights law!

**Topics include:**

- Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act
- Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act
- How to file a complaint



## Making Michigan Accessible Virtual Forum on August 24



### MAKING MICHIGAN ACCESSIBLE

Join the Michigan Department of Civil Rights as they explore disability law and the ways that Michigan businesses can ensure that their goods and services are accessible to all.

Advance registration is required.

#### UPCOMING VIRTUAL FORUM

**Date:** Thursday, August 24

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Topic:** Making Michigan Accessible

**Register Here:** <https://bit.ly/3OblUzx>



**August 24**  
**10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.**

*Flyer featuring a young woman sitting in a wheelchair. Text MAKING MICHIGAN ACCESSIBLE. Join the Michigan Department of Civil Rights as they explore disability law and the ways that Michigan businesses can ensure that their goods and services are accessible to all. Advance registration is required. UPCOMING VIRTUAL FORUM Date: Thursday, August 24 Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Topic: Making Michigan Accessible Register Here: <https://bit.ly/3OblUzx> August 24 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.*

**Topic:** Making Michigan Accessible

**Date:** August 24, 2023



**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Register Here:** <https://bit.ly/3ObIUzx>

## **2023 MI Response to Hate Conference In East Lansing September 14**



*Photo of protests with a capitol in the background. Text: Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the deaths of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. MI RESPONSE TO HATE CONFERENCE. LEGISLATING AGAINST HATE. September 14, 2023 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Conference Speakers: Michael Lieberman, Southern Poverty Law Center. Becky L. Monroe, California Civil Rights Department. Louvon Byrd Harris, The Byrd Foundation for Racial Healing. Judy and Dennis Shepard, Matthew Shepard Foundation. Required Pre-Registration Ends Sept. 1. <https://bit.ly/435zaKd> Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center 219 S Harrison Rd, East Lansing, MI 48824*

### **MI Response to Hate Conference**

**Date:** September 14, 2023

**Time:** 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**Topic:** Legislating Against Hate

**Register Here:** <https://bit.ly/435zaKd>

Confirmed speakers include:

- Michael Lieberman, Southern Poverty Law Center
- Becky L. Monroe, California Civil Rights Department
- Louvon Byrd Harris, The Byrd Foundation for Racial Healing
- Judy and Dennis Shepard, Matthew Shepard Foundation

During the event, we will also commemorate the 25th anniversary of the deaths of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr.

**Pre-registration is required and ends September 1, 2023.**

**For more information or to register: <https://bit.ly/435zaKd>**



## **Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion to Meet Virtually on September 20**

**Date:** September 20, 2023

**Time:** 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Location:** Virtual (See Link Below)

The next meeting of the Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion will take place virtually on September 20, 2023, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. The main topic of the event is the [Resource Guide to Developing a School Equity Plan](#), which was designed as a template to operationalize equity in Michigan's K-12 education system. Participants will also discuss ongoing efforts to strengthen the work of DEI in our state.

MDCR invites representatives from local units of government, school districts, and institutions of higher education to participate in these opportunities. If you plan to attend the meeting for the first time and have any questions, please contact MDCR's DEI Director Alfredo Hernandez-Corsen [hernandez3@michigan.gov](mailto:hernandez3@michigan.gov).

Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion meetings primarily aim to provide a networking and information sharing venue for DEI challenges, strategies, barriers, and best practices in Michigan. Our goal is to address the root cause of social disparities and assess programs to create and sustain equitable access and opportunities.

### **Virtual Attendance Via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84460074589?pwd=dVdTMGtMSUgvU3loRG4rNi9IREpWQT09>

Meeting ID: 844 6007 4589

Passcode: zuSt65

*(Image is of a diverse group of cartoon people assembling a large puzzle)*

## We Are Hiring!



MDCR is searching for a Departmental Technician to work within our Education division! This position will help us to manage and enhance our internal and external training programs. <https://tinyurl.com/3dmtzkrd>

*(Image text: We're Hiring. Join our team)*

## Civil Rights Commission Actions



The Michigan Civil Rights Commission met on July 24 in Marquette. During the meeting, the Commission took aim at hate crimes and passed a resolution calling for direct executive and legislative action to “deter, prohibit and where necessary criminally penalize” hate crimes and acts of desecration.

Read the resolution:

[Resolution in Support of Executive and Legislative Efforts to Address Hate Crimes and Acts of Desecration](#)

The Commission also issued a proclamation recognizing the 33rd anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Read the ADA anniversary proclamation:

[Proclamation in Recognition of ADA 33rd Anniversary](#)

## Legislative Update

**By Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D.,**

**MDCR Legislative Liaison**

Each month, Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D., Legislative Liaison for the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, will bring you updates and analysis of what's happening in the Michigan legislature -- news of legislation, executive orders and ballot initiatives that relate directly to the MDCR mission and impact the people we serve.



*(Image is the Michigan Capitol)*



## **WMU-Cooley Law School Hosts Civil Rights Presentation**

WMU-Cooley Law School hosted civil rights activist Dr. Jerome Reide for the law school's Social Justice Lunch Hour on June 30. Reide, who serves as the legislative liaison for MDCR, spoke about a variety of topics, including the

need for students to become involved in their community and make society a better place.

*(Image is of Jerome Reide standing before a podium)*



## **Michigan Voting Rights Act Bill Introduced**

Sponsored by MI Senators Darrin Camilleri (D-Trenton), Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit), Erika Geiss (D-Taylor) and Jeremy Moss (D-Southfield), the bill was created with Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson.

According to a June 22 [press release](#) by Senator Chang, the act would do four things:

1. Prohibit voter denial, dilution, and/or suppression.
2. Require and expand the jurisdictions that must translate election-related information into languages other than English, to ensure that language

minority groups in our state have an equal opportunity to participate in the voting process.

3. Enhance and clarify protections for voters with disabilities or who otherwise need assistance to vote.
4. Prohibit intimidation, coercion, and deceptive practices of government and private actors with the intent or results in protected classes not participating in the election. The action can be before, during, or after the election.

(Image is of a historical banner with text: "Get a piece of the action. Register to Vote.")

## Promote the Vote Signed Into Law



In November 2022,  
Ballot Proposal 22-2

"Promote the Vote" was overwhelmingly passed by the people of Michigan to make it easier to vote in a secure way, encouraging as many people as possible to make their voices heard on the ballot. Prop 2 proposed to amend the state constitution to add election provisions.

On July 18, 2023, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed bipartisan legislation that codified Prop 2 and provided a variety of means by which to reach that goal.

The below chart depicts the recent voting rights bills that have been enacted to further the Prop 2 initiative.

Bill Number	Sponsor	Description
<a href="#">Senate Bill 13</a>	Senator Jeremy Moss	Moves Michigan's presidential primary to February.
<a href="#">Senate Bill 259</a>	Senator Paul Wojno	Ensures absentee ballots from military and overseas voters are counted if received up to 6 days after an election.
<a href="#">Senate Bill 339</a>	Senator Mallory McMorrow	Establishes a website through which Michigan voters can track their ballots, receive updates, and receive notifications of any errors.
<a href="#">Senate Bill 367</a>	Senator Jeremy Moss	Requires at least nine days of early voting before each statewide and federal election.



<a href="#"><u>Senate Bill 370</u></a>	Senator Sylvia Santana	Allows voters to fix clerical errors with their ballots and requires prepaid postage for all absentee ballots.
<a href="#"><u>Senate Bill 373</u></a>	Senator Stephanie Chang	Allows Michigan voters to use their US Passport, tribal photo ID, military ID, or student ID to identify themselves at the ballot box.
<a href="#"><u>House Bill 4696</u></a>	Rep. Penelope Tsernoglou	Makes disclosing an election result from early voting before Election Day a Class E felony.
<a href="#"><u>House Bill 4697</u></a>	Rep. Matt Koleszar	Requires one secure drop box for every municipality or at least one drop box for every 15,000 registered voters for municipalities with more than 15,000 registered voters.
<a href="#"><u>House Bill 4699</u></a>	Rep. Erin Byrnes	Allows voters to vote by mail and have a ballot mailed to them in all future elections via a single application.
<a href="#"><u>House Bill 4702</u></a>	Rep. Penelope Tsernoglou	Increases the maximum size of an election precinct from 2,999 active registered electors to 5,000, lowering election costs for local governments.

(Image is a Promote the Vote banner)

## Subscribe to updates from Michigan Department of Civil Rights

### Fall Into Civil Rights! - September 2023

*Michigan Department of Civil Rights sent this bulletin at 09/19/2023 09:34 AM EDT*

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**MI CIVIL RIGHTS**  
News from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights



September 19, 2023

#### In This Issue:

- [2023 MI Response to Hate Conference Held in East Lansing](#)

- [MDCR Releases PSA on Hate and Bias](#)
- [We Are Hiring!](#)
- [Civil Rights Commission to Meet Near Traverse City](#)
- [MDCR by the Numbers](#)
- [Legislative Update](#)

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## 2023 MI Response to Hate Conference Held in East Lansing



With the theme "Legislating Against Hate," the 2023 MI Response to Hate Conference again drew a full capacity crowd to East Lansing. Hosted by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights and Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes, the event featured several national speakers.

The morning plenary session set the tone for the event with dual keynotes and a panel discussion from Michael Lieberman and Becky L. Monroe. Lieberman serves as

Senior Policy Counsel for Hate and Extremism for the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), while Monroe is the Deputy Director of Strategic Initiatives at the California Civil Rights Department.

*(Wide shot of the audience of the MI Response to Hate 2023 Conference)*

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Attendees were treated to four repeating workshops during the event. Topics of focus for the breakouts included: the codification of hate, a panel on prosecuting hate, legislative processes, and a session on responding to bias for youth.



Perhaps the most important event of the day was the lunch plenary session commemorating Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. As the namesakes for the Shepard-Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act, both individuals were murdered in horrendous hate crimes 25 years ago. In order to tell the full

story of the victims, participants heard personal stories from their families. Judy and Dennis Shepard and Louvon Byrd Harris all provided the critical element of giving voice to the voiceless.

*(Image is a panel discussion to commemorate Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. From left to right: Michael Lieberman, Louvon Byrd Harris, Judy Shepard, and Dennis Shepard)*

## MDCR Releases PSA on Hate and Bias



*Image is a screen capture from the PSA featuring an MDCR staff member and the text: "Did you Know?"*

On August 23, the department held a virtual news conference to release our public service announcement (PSA) on hate crimes and bias incidents in Michigan. The PSA was filmed by the PR firm Amplified Media and Communication, and features a script and actors from MDCR.

[View the PSA here.](#)

In announcing the PSA, Director Johnson made it clear that MDCR will remain active in combating hate and bias.

“Our commitment to countering the forces of hate and bias in Michigan is long and ongoing. This PSA is our effort to reach people in their daily lives, watching TV in their living rooms, listening to radio as they commute to work or drive to the grocery store. The PSA is not only informational, it is inspirational. It says that whoever you are, wherever you reside in Michigan, you are not alone. There is a community of people who are working to stop hate and bias and help those who have been victimized by it.”

[Read the entire press release here.](#)



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## We Are Hiring!



MDCR is searching for an Administrative Law Specialist and a Departmental Analyst to oversee the ADA Title II grievance procedure. Share these opportunities with your professional networks and friends!

<https://tinyurl.com/3pfva942>

*(Image text: We're Hiring. Join our team)*

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## Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion to Meet Virtually on September 20



**Date:** September 20, 2023

**Time:** 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Location:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84460074589?pwd=dVdTMGtMSUgVU3loRG4rNi9IREpWQT09>

Meeting ID: 844 6007 4589

Passcode: zuSt65

**Main Topic:** [Resource Guide to Developing a School Equity Plan](#)

Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion meetings primarily aim to provide a networking and information sharing venue for DEI challenges, strategies, barriers, and best practices in Michigan. The organization includes leaders in government and education who collaborate and share information to create DEI solutions for their institutions. Our overall goal is to address the root cause of social disparities and assess programs to create and sustain equitable access and opportunities.

Please contact MDCR's DEI Director Alfredo Hernandez-Corsen at [hernandeza3@michigan.gov](mailto:hernandeza3@michigan.gov) with questions.

*(Image is of the Michigan Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion banner with the MDCR logo.)*

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## Civil Rights Commission to Meet Near Traverse City



The Michigan Civil Rights Commission will hold their next quarterly meeting at 10:00 AM on Monday, October 23, 2023, in Thompsonville, Michigan, about 30 miles outside of Traverse City.

Watch our social media and future editions of MI Civil Rights for information.

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## MDCR by the Numbers



As a civil law enforcement agency, most of our resources are devoted to the complaint investigation process. Below is our investigation data for the period between January 1, 2023, and August 31, 2023:

- 4,370 contacts by people requesting new complaints\*
- 975 new investigations opened
- 893 investigations closed
- 123 cases were closed due to a settlement agreement or adjustment \*\*
- \$231,354.50 in actual settlements and \$119,620 in annualized settlements \*\*\*

*\* Contacts may not become complaints for a variety of reasons, including non-jurisdictional matters, filing deadline violations, or the claimant deciding not to proceed.*

*\*\* Adjustment can refer to any actions taken by the respondent to resolve a complaint. MDCR is not always privy to the terms of the adjustment or settlement.*

*\*\*\* In actual settlements, money is paid directly to claimants. Annualized settlement data refers to calculated expected earnings or benefits from reinstatement or hire as a result of an agreement.*

*(Image is MDCR logo.)*

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# Legislative Update

By Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D.,

MDCR Legislative Liaison

Each month, Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D., Legislative Liaison for the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, will bring you updates and analysis of what's happening in the Michigan legislature -- news of legislation, executive orders and ballot initiatives that relate directly to the MDCR mission and impact the people we serve.



*(Image is the Michigan Capitol)*



## Trial Ordered on Lawsuit Alleging Black Vote Dilution by Redistricting Maps

On Tuesday, August 29, a panel of three federal judges ordered a trial to determine if the Michigan Independent Citizens

Redistricting Commission (MICRC) violated the Voting Rights Act by redrawing Detroit-area district lines to include suburban communities. Some of the districts impacted had a Black population of more than 90% before 2021, but stand at less than 50% following the redraw.

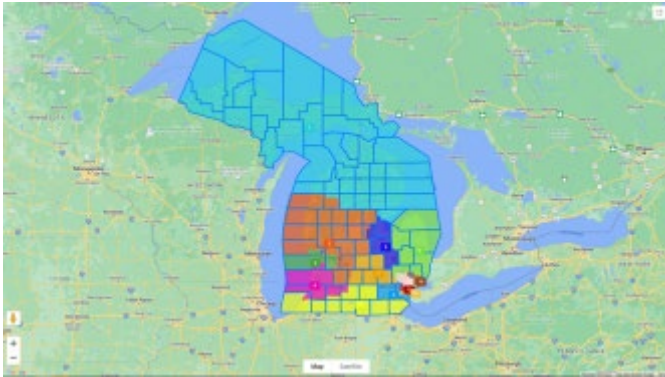
### The Voting Rights Act and Michigan Minorities

Due in part to the effects of segregation, populations of Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, "Other," and those who identify with "two or more" racial groups are often concentrated into geographic areas. As a result of their common regional and demographic interests, these communities need the ability to coalesce and elect candidates of their choice. The VRA specifically requires that majority-minority districts be drawn to prevent vote dilution in Saginaw, Southfield, Flint, Pontiac, Taylor, Inkster, Redford, Hamtramck, and Detroit.

Under the new district lines, each of these communities of interest could be denied the opportunity to elect some candidates of their choice since percentages of majority-minority districts were diluted by the most recent MICRC maps. For example:

- There were twelve majority Black (with three majority-minority districts) state house districts. The MICRC maps cut the number of majority Black districts in half.
- The four state senate districts that were majority Black were eliminated in the MICRC maps.
- Instead of the two majority-minority congressional seats Detroit has had since 1980, the MICRC map has one.

(Image is of a historical banner with text: "Get a piece of the action. Register to Vote.")



#### More Information:

[Michigan Civil Rights Commission Resolution in Support of Fair Maps and in Opposition to Minority Vote Dilution](#)

WHMI: [Civil Rights Chief Says Draft Maps Violate Voting Rights Act](#) (10/21)

Detroit Free Press: [Redistricting commission told its draft maps violate](#)

[federal Voting Rights Act](#) (10/20)

Deadline Detroit: [Back To The Drawing Board? Michigan Redistricting Maps Violate Civil Rights, Commission Told](#) (10/21)

MLive: WXYZ: [MI Civil Rights Commission: Proposed redistricting maps could violate Voting Rights Act](#) (10/21)

Detroit News: [Redistricting draft maps violate Voting Rights Act, civil rights director says](#) (10/20)

Michigan Advance: [Michigan civil rights chief says redistricting maps violate the Voting Rights Act](#) (10/21)

(Image is a district map of Michigan)

**Subscribe to updates from Michigan Department of Civil Rights**

**MCRC Public Hearing on Housing Discrimination Nov 8 in Detroit**

*Michigan Department of Civil Rights sent this bulletin at 10/06/2023 10:54 AM EDT*

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**MI CIVIL RIGHTS**  
News from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights



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**In This Issue:**

- [Message From Executive Director Johnson](#)
  - [MCRC Public Hearing on Housing Discrimination Nov 8 in Detroit](#)
- 

## Message From Executive Director Johnson

Dear Stakeholders of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR):

**Fair housing is YOUR right!**

Those of us who are involved in civil rights and social justice causes know the importance of housing. The location of a person's home can determine so many life outcomes that are often not consciously linked to an address. For example, at our Civil Rights Summit in June, we explored the many ways that housing conditions can directly impact health.

Accordingly, discrimination in housing has the ability to change the path of multiple generations of a family. That makes fair housing one of the most fundamental rights we can defend in the US.

Today, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission and Michigan Department of Civil Rights are proud to announce a series of public hearings on housing discrimination over the next few months. Our first hearing is already scheduled for November 8, 2023, at Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior High School in Detroit.

If you have friends, family members or contacts who are concerned about housing in southeastern Michigan, please share the below linked [flyer](#) and encourage them to attend this event. Our Commission wants to hear real life stories about bias and discrimination in every aspect of housing, including buying a home, renting apartments, credit ratings, home loans, and appraisals. The Commission and MDCR will use these testimonies, along with advice and guidance from our organizational partners, to create a list of policy recommendations for the state.

Our efforts are designed to work in tandem with the [MI Statewide Housing Plan](#), which includes among its goals:

- Using data to identify systemic inequities
- Advocating for policy change to remove barriers to housing access



- Increasing opportunities for resident input in the development process

Please join us on November 8 in Detroit, and look for other public forum announcements in the future!

*John E. Johnson, Jr., J.D.*

*Executive Director*

*Michigan Department of Civil Rights*

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## **MCRC Public Hearing on Housing Discrimination Nov 8 in Detroit**





**MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**PUBLIC HEARING ON**  
**HOUSING DISCRIMINATION**

**4-7 p.m., Nov. 8, 2023**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior High School**  
**3200 E Lafayette St. | Detroit, MI 48207**

**The Michigan Civil Rights Commission wants to hear  
your experience with housing discrimination:**

- When purchasing a home.
- When renting a home.
- When applying for a home loan.
- When reviewing your credit rating.

**ASL Interpreters will be provided. To request other  
accommodations, contact Shawn Sanford at  
MDCR-INFO@michigan.gov or 1-800-482-3604 at  
least 3 business days prior to the hearing.**



**Michigan.gov/mdcr/commission**

*MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING ON HOUSING DISCRIMINATION. 4-7 p.m., Nov. 8, 2023 Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior High School 3200 E Lafayette St. | Detroit, MI 48207. The Michigan Civil Rights Commission wants to hear your experience with housing discrimination: • When purchasing a home. • When renting a home. • When applying for a home loan. • When reviewing your credit rating.*

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## Public Hearing on Housing Discrimination

**When:** Nov. 8, 2023, 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Where:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior High School, 3200 E Lafayette St., Detroit, MI 48207

**Hosted By:** Michigan Civil Rights Commission

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission is seeking public testimony about experiences with discrimination in housing. If you have experienced discrimination in buying, renting, home loans, or credit rating processes, this is YOUR chance to be heard! The Commission will use this testimony to create a list of recommendations for securing fair housing in Michigan.

### Fair Housing Is Your Right!

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**Subscribe to updates from Michigan Department of Civil Rights**

**Thankful for the Fight to Preserve Civil Rights - MDCR**

*Michigan Department of Civil Rights sent this bulletin at 11/16/2023 02:45 PM EST*

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**MI CIVIL RIGHTS**  
News from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights



November 16, 2023

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### In This Issue:

- [MDCR Issues Charge of Discrimination Against Studio 8 Hair Lab](#)
- [Commission Takes on Driver's Licenses for Undocumented and Issues Resolution on Dynamic Character Legislation](#)
- [MCRC Public Hearing on Housing Discrimination Held in Detroit](#)
- [MI Civil Rights Legislative Update](#)

## MDCR Issues Charge of Discrimination Against Studio 8 Hair Lab



After investigating several certified complaints filed against a Traverse City salon, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) today filed a formal charge of discrimination against the Studio 8 Hair Lab LLC.

In the charge, MDCR asserts that after an investigation of at least three complaints filed with the agency, they have found that statements published by Studio 8 Hair Lab LLC on social media and elsewhere denying services to individuals based on sex is a violation of the state's primary civil rights law,

the [Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act \(ELCRA\)](#).

"The law is clear," said Executive Director Johnson. "If your business provides services, facilities, goods or accommodations to the public, advertising that those services will not be offered to certain individuals based on sex is a violation of civil rights law and could put you at risk of the kind of charge Studio 8 is facing today."

**[Read the full text of the press release, including the charge of discrimination against Studio 8.](#)**

**[Watch the virtual press conference announcing the charge.](#)**

*(Image is a screen capture from the virtual press conference. Clockwise speakers starting in the upper left corner: Communications Director Vicki Levensgood, Enforcement Director Marcelina Trevino, Legal Affairs Director Bryant Osikowicz, Staff Attorney Alannah Buford-Kamerman, and Executive Director John E. Johnson, Jr.)*

## Commission Takes on Driver's Licenses for Undocumented and Issues Resolution on Dynamic Character Legislation



*Members of the 2023 Michigan Civil Rights Commission, L to R: David Worthams, Richard Corriveau, Gloria Lara, Regina Gasco, Portia Roberson (Chair), Zenna Elhasan (Vice Chair), Luke Londo, and Rosann Barker.*

At their Oct. 23, 2023 meeting in Thompsonville, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) tackled a packed agenda, passing resolutions on driver's licenses for undocumented individuals and concerns with Dynamic Character legislation that would require replacing the current accessible parking graphic. They also unanimously passed two motions to seek legal opinions on issues facing transgender and non-binary students.

Commissioner Gloria Lara introduced a proposed resolution encouraging responsible legislative and executive efforts supportive of providing residents access to drivers licenses regardless of undocumented status. Find the full resolution [here](#).

The Commission also unanimously passed a resolution outlining concerns over Dynamic Character legislation, which mandates MCRC to lead a plan to replace the current accessibility graphic with a more dynamic image. Read the complete resolution [here](#) to learn why Commissioners believe this effort may be in violation of federal law.



In other action, the Commission unanimously passed two motions offered by Commissioner Luke Londo. One requests a legal opinion on whether denying transgender students access to restrooms that align with their gender identity violates the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act or other laws.

The second was also a request for a legal opinion on whether it is a violation of trans and non-binary students' civil rights under ELCRA to refuse to address them by their chosen pronouns and names. The second motion included the request that the Commission, if necessary, prepare an interpretive statement on these issues for consideration at the next Commission meeting.

*(Image is the Commission logo and the text MCRC Michigan Civil Rights Commission)*

## MCRC Public Hearing on Housing Discrimination Held in Detroit



### Public Hearing on Fair Housing Detroit, MI - November 8, 2023

On Nov. 8, 2023, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission held the first of several public hearings to hear directly from Michigan residents on their experience of discrimination in buying, renting, or obtaining financing to purchase a home.

The Nov. 8 hearing marked the launch of an extensive effort lead by the Commission and its operational arm, the Michigan

Department of Civil Rights, to take a comprehensive look at housing discrimination in Michigan and to develop policy and regulatory recommendations to address it.

The Detroit public hearing is one of four that will be held in Michigan communities from November 2023 to April of 2024, followed by a Civil Rights Summit on June 12 in Detroit.

**Upcoming dates:**

- February 7: a virtual public hearing open to residents anywhere in Michigan
- March 16: Flint/Saginaw/Bay City public hearing, location TBA
- April 28: Grand Rapids public hearing, location TBA
- June 12: Civil Rights Summit on Housing, to be held at The Icon, 200 Walker Street, Detroit, MI 48207



“The series of hearings on housing discrimination followed by a Civil Rights Summit in June mark a significant investment by the Commission in revealing the scope and impact of housing discrimination on the communities we serve,” said John E. Johnson, Executive Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. “We urge any resident of the state who has faced the specter of housing discrimination to come to a hearing and tell your story.”

[Watch the MCRC Detroit Fair Housing Hearing](#)

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## MI Civil Rights Legislative Update

**By Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D.,**

**MDCR Legislative Liaison**

Each month, Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D., Legislative Liaison for the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, will bring you updates and analysis of what's happening in the Michigan legislature -- news of legislation, executive orders and ballot initiatives that relate directly to the MDCR mission and impact the people we serve.

*(Image is the Michigan Capitol)*



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## Effective Dates of New Legislation



Michigan's 2023 legislative session has ended, with both the House and Senate adjourning for the year. For many, that leaves the question of when new laws take effect.

Unless it is given immediate effect, any bill signed by Governor Whitmer becomes law 91 days after the Legislature adjourns 'sine die.' Since the 102<sup>nd</sup> Michigan Legislature adjourned Tuesday, November 14, 2023, the effective date for all 'sine die' legislation is February 13, 2024. That includes:

- PA 0006: Which adds sexual orientation and gender identity or expression to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.
- PA 0031: Which removes certain references to non-therapeutic abortions in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.
- PA 0045: Which prohibits discrimination based on traits historically associated with race, such as hair texture.
- PA 0064: Which exempts from the Freedom Of Information Act any public records which identify parties proceeding anonymously in civil actions alleging sexual misconduct.

[Read the full list of 2023 Public Acts.](#) Note, the Public Acts list is updated periodically by the [Legislative Services Bureau](#).

*(Image is a photo of Michigan's Capitol building.)*

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## The Reproductive Health Act Passed by the 102nd Michigan Legislature



Health insurers will now be required to cover all pregnancy-related health care, including abortion.

Last year Michigan voted to amend the state constitution to add protections for reproductive rights. The amendment defines reproductive freedom as "the right to make and carry out pregnancy-related decisions such as those concerning prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion, miscarriage management, and infertility care."

Several abortion restrictions were repealed by the Legislature.

Among the repeals are:



- The prohibition on colleges and universities referring students to clinics for abortion services.
- A state mandate that abortion patients receive materials on alternatives to an abortion such as adoption.
- Hallway width and procedure room size for abortion facilities.

(Image is cartoon silhouette of two women with text: "Reproductive Rights")

## MI House of Representatives Votes to Ban Guns at Polling Places



Two measures to bar guns near or at polling places, ballot drop boxes, and vote counting locations were passed by the Michigan House of Representatives on November 13, 2023. Currently, Washington, D.C. and 18 states forbid open carry at polling sites and drop boxes.

(Photo of a gun)

## MI Redistricting Trial Testimony Ends

A federal court in Kalamazoo heard closing arguments in a trial to determine if the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commissions' (MICRC) maps have led to forbidden retrogression in minority voting strength. Election district maps cannot be drawn in a way that impairs the ability of geographically insular and politically cohesive groups of black voters to participate equally in the political process and to elect candidates of their choice. [Thornburg v. Gingles \(1986\)](#).



account of race or color." Coalitions of Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, "Other," and those who identify with "two or more" racial groups have had the ability to coalesce and elect candidates of their choice.

The VRA requires majority-minority districts be drawn to prevent vote dilution in cities such as Detroit. This community of interest may have been denied the opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice if the 2010 percentages of majority-minority districts was diluted.

The U.S. Supreme Court determined three threshold measures in *Thornburg v. Gingles* (1986) should be used to evaluate whether an electoral map violates the rights of minority groups set forth in the Voting Rights Act:

- A minority group must demonstrate it is large enough and compact enough to constitute a majority in an electoral district.
- A minority group must demonstrate it is politically united.
- A minority group must demonstrate the majority group historically votes sufficiently as a group to defeat the minority group's preferred candidate.

(Image is the Linden Senate *District map of Michigan* found at <https://michigan.mydistricting.com/legdistricting/comments/plan/281/23>)

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